

CONTROL NO:

DATE:

June 24, 1986

TIME:

9:50am

DISTRIBUTION:

I. Sameer P. Brandt
B. Mawry R. Burd
G. Friday

BETWEEN:

E. C. Goodson

OF:

DOE-SR/ED

PHONE:

(725) 3965

AND:

J. J. Oliver

(NUS)

DISCUSSION:

I called Dr. Goodson to find out the status of the recently sighted Bald Eagle on the SRP. Dr. Goodson stated that the first sighting occurred on June 5, and would send me a copy of the memo from McCort to Wright dated June 10. This memo details the current status of Eagles on the SRP (see Attachment A).

ACTION ITEMS:

SAVANNAH RIVER ECOLOGY LABORATORY
DRAWER E
AIKEN, SOUTH CAROLINA 29801

TELEPHONE (803) 725-2472

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
INSTITUTE OF ECOLOGY

June 18, 1986

TO: S. R. Wright
FROM: W. D. McCort

cc: A. B. Gould
J. R. Jansen
D. S. Day
E. C. Goodson
J. G. Irwin
T. O. Smith
F. A. Brooks
R. Austin
M. H. Smith
J. W. Gibbons
J. J. Mayer
SREL Central File

SUBJECT: First Nesting Record of a Bald Eagle on the Savannah River Plant

On the afternoon of June 5, 1986, we received a call from John Irwin, SRFS, who reported the presence of a Bald Eagle nest on the SRP. John stated that the nest site had been discovered by personnel from the University of South Carolina Archeology Unit working on the SRP, and was subsequently reported to the SRFS. Earlier that day, Mike Caudell, SCWMRD, had gone out to the site and reported having seen one adult Bald Eagle, which circled in the air above him, screaming a high, shrill cry at his approach to the nest site. John Irwin and several SRFS personnel visited the nest site shortly after Mike Caudell. At that time, an adult bird was again seen circling above the site screaming at the visitors and one immature Bald Eagle was seen perching next to the nest.

On June 6, 1986, Jack Mayer, SREL, visited the site with two SRFS personnel.

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~~_____~~
~~_____~~
The nest was located approximately 7-9 m high in a live Bald Cypress (Taxodium distichum) situated in the central area of the open flooded portion of the shallow pond. The water level in the pond was apparently maintained by the active beaver colony at the site. At that time, two immature birds were observed perching around the nest. No adult birds were seen. After about two hours of observation, an approaching helicopter caused the two immature birds to leave the nest and fly north toward Par Pond.

In addition to the Bald Eagle nest at the beaver pond, there were six active American Anhinga (Anhinga anhinga) nests, one active

Red-headed Woodpecker (Melanerpes erythrocephalus) cavity nest and one active Great Blue Heron (Ardea herodias) nest at the site. The surface of the pond was almost completely covered with vegetation indicating that the Bald Eagles were probably foraging elsewhere for food. This same location had been checked by SREL in September 1985 during a site-wide aerial search of the SRP for Bald Eagle nests. No nest was observed in the field or detected in the photograph of the site taken at that time, confirming that the current Bald Eagle nest is a first-year nest. On June 11, 1986, the site was visited again by personnel from SRFS and SCWMRD. Both immature birds and one adult were seen at the beaver pond.

We are taking care to not disclose the location of the nest on the SRP in order to minimize human activity about the nest and protect it. The location details in this memo are provided only for those immediately involved and will otherwise be kept confidential by SREL. Hopefully, the location of the nest can be well guarded by all agencies involved.

Currently, we are discussing research studies on the Bald Eagles and nest. For example, analysis of food scraps about the nest would provide information on the diets of the eagles. Sometime in the near future, we shall provide you with a proposal for our studies. We shall not initiate any studies without first discussing our interests with DOE, SRFS and other appropriate groups.

If you have any questions or need further information regarding the Bald Eagles and nest, please let me know.